



Ray Edwards Show, Episode 322

Are You Important?

Female Announcer: Coming up on the *Ray Edwards Show*.

Ray Edwards: Out of a hundred people who hear this, one of you will do this and you're the one who will succeed [laughs] and the other 99 all think they're the one.

Female Announcer: *Ray Edwards Show* episode 322. Are you important?

Male Announcer: It's the *Ray Edwards Show*. This is the podcast for prosperity with purpose.

[music]

Ray: Episode 322 starts with this question that I would seriously like you to think about.

Sean: Me or-

Ray: The listener. Are you important? Are you?

Sean: Frank Sinclair.

Ray: Thanks, Frank. This is a vital question and it speaks to something we call self-image. It's popular nowadays to believe that your self-image, having a good self-image, a strong self-image, a positive image of yourself is wrong. It's popular to say that. That we should not think of ourselves as important, that that's morally corrupt. This is the first line of attack of the enemy, trying to divide your mind by convincing it, it does not exist.

Sean: Hello.

Ray: Which is what he's been doing since the beginning.

Sean: Seriously though.

Ray: The father of lies.

Male Announcer: Now, our feature presentation.

Ray: Trying to convince you- think about this, trying to convince your mind that it doesn't exist. That leads to insanity-

Sean: It does.

Ray: - because if your mind is convinced that it doesn't exist, what is convinced?



Sean: Right.

Ray: Who convinced it?

Sean: Right. Honestly, the person who asked that question, posed a really interesting-- I really haven't really thought this through so I haven't thought this through but it's really interesting prospect. If you believe that the mind doesn't exist and that it's just a bunch of atoms slamming against each other or whatever some of the theories are, electrical impulses, that's all the mind is, then, how can you say that you're still the same person after seven years transpires because every cell in your body, after seven years, changes?

Ray: Every cell is sacred.

Sean: That's an interesting question. If you don't believe in the mind, then, every seven years you're a different-

Ray: Well, Deepak Chopra would say that, "This is the truth. You are a different person. You're becoming-"

Sean: Well, you're different.

Ray: "You're becoming more of the ground of being every day."

Sean: But you remember. You have memories.

Ray: You think you remember.

Sean: Okay. I see where this is going.

Ray: As Christians, we're taught we should crucify our old man.

Sean: That's right.

Ray: And our sin nature and fight against it and struggle.

Sean: That's right.

Ray: We should think that we are nothing, that we are worms, that we are inferior to all other beings. This is what we're taught. I'm not saying this is in the Teachings, the source material. Buddhists and Mindfulness practitioners, they've even got a more interesting take on things. They're seeking something that they call the state of "No Self".

Sean: I don't know how far I want to go down into that rabbit trail. [laughs] I don't know how many people I might offend. [chuckle]

Ray: Let's give it a try. We can always cut it out.



Sean: That's true. I took an extremely good comparative religion class, an upper-level comparative religion class in college and the professor did an amazing job because every time he would teach from the perspective of a faith, he would put on that faith's hat. He would do the apologetics of that faith and the mindset and the reasoning. The reason I knew he was pretty good is because he wasn't a Christian but he treated the Christian section very well. I would've said, "Yes. I would've thought you were a Christian."

Ray: So, he barely represented the viewpoint of Christians?

Sean: Right. Yes. That made me comfortable in his representation of other people, especially because it's so popular in college campuses to paint Christianity in such a bad light.

Ray: Right. We're tolerant of everybody except Christians.

Sean: Right. The fact that he did a fair job made me-- He taught on the original Buddha, the Buddhist teachings. Buddha was part of the Yogis, the Hindu Yogis, and their mantra, [chuckle] at that point was, "The Atman is Brahman", meaning, their Atman was a concept of we might think of it as the soul-like thing and then, the Brahman was not God. It was more of akin to the force.

Ray: [hums]

Sean: Yes, exactly. Their saying was you reach enlightenment when you realize that your soul is really just the same thing as God and there's really no distinction between you and God.

Ray: Yes. You're just a piece of God.

Sean: Right. Well, the big insight that Buddha had was that there is no Atman, which- you're right. There is no mind but then, his whole philosophy is, then, all life is suffering because desire is suffering, therefore, the way that you escape suffering-

Ray: Is to eliminate desire.

Sean: Is to eliminate desire.

Ray: So, just don't want anything?

Sean: That's escapism. That's not philosophy. That's not-

Ray: That's making your life an empty shell.

Sean: Right.

Ray: Yes. An interesting book to really grasp this-

Sean: I'm sorry Buddhists if you're offended but your teacher just wanted-

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Ray: Well, you can't be offended because it's all an illusion anyway.

Sean: It's all an illusion because he wanted to escape the pain of life.

Ray: Reality.

Sean: Yes, he wanted to escape reality, which you can't do.

Ray: There's a book if you want to grasp more of those ideas. It's really a good story. It's called Siddhartha. I really enjoyed that book. I haven't read it a long time. I might read it now and think it's terrible so maybe you should not read it [laughs] until I had a chance to vet it for you.

Sean: Anyway, a lot of people, they look at Buddhism as this form of enlightenment but, really, Buddhism is-- I can't remember who the original quote who said this was but someone originally said, "All philosophy is dying", the whole goal of philosophy. They were wrong. I don't agree with them. Is to totally reject reality and the body-

Ray: Oh, yes. This was the philosopher who said, "The only valid question that you should ask yourself every day is whether or not is to commit suicide."

Sean: The whole concept was your whole idea is you need to spurn the material world and only focus on the spiritual things and once you fully achieve, really, you won't be in the material world anymore.

Ray: It always comes back to Plato and Aristotle.

Sean: It does and somehow, Buddha, got in on that too because his' is clearly another form of that.

Ray: He was newsjacking. [chuckles] The question- to return to the initial question, are you important? You're going to get our answer in a few minutes. You probably think you already know the answer.

Sean: Especially with how we attacked the-

Ray: Yes, you're probably right. You probably do know the answer.

Male Announcer: Now, simple hacks that make life cheaper, easier and faster, Ray's tip of the week.

Ray: Tip of the week this week, I'm about ready to abandon Evernote. Did you ever think you'd hear me say that?

Sean: No, but I'm also not surprised.

Ray: Why are you not surprised? Because that's what I do, I change apps.



Sean: Well, there's that. Honestly, I could never get into Evernote because it was, in my mind, it was too much.

Ray: I can see that. Here's the thing that's been bugging me, lately, is Evernote has its own proprietary way of storing your stuff.

Sean: All those programs-- That's why never get into those.

Ray: You're locked in and I think of it as a roach motel. Your documents go in but they never come out.

Sean: It's like I'm getting this program that-- I feel I often want to design my own to-do list software but then, I feel like it would be customized to my psychology and whenever I'm using someone else's to-do list or productivity or note taking application, I always feel I'm using someone else's flow.

Ray: That's a good rationale for not using a to-do list or test that.

Sean: I use my own. I make my own.

Ray: Okay. You should show it to me sometime maybe we could sell it.

Sean: [chuckles] No, because it's really simple.

Ray: Evernote, of course, is a note-taking application. I think I'm going to replace it with a new note-taking application called Bear, B-E-A-R. Here's the reason why. It uses plain text files to store all your documents.

Sean: Oh, that's nice.

Ray: It uses markup to do any formatting so it exports to any other application. There's no translation problem getting into virtually any other application. They have a special function to help you export all your notes out of Evernote into Bear.

Sean: Oh, nice.

Ray: You can preserve your tags.

Sean: If people-- Let's just go back on that, if you find Evernote works for you, that's fine. That's cool. It seems that every time I use one of those apps, I'm like, "Yes, this was designed for someone else's brain."

Ray: Well, you should definitely use an app that works for your brain.

Sean: Right, for sure.

Ray: Check out Bear, you may like it. If you're attracted at all to the idea of getting your notes into plain text files so they're portable and no matter what happens in the future- it's future-proofing your documents.

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Male Announcer: Does anyone want to live a life that is long and prosperous? Spiritual foundations.

Ray: Spiritual foundations this week will focus on the same question, are you important? Sean, I want to start by reading to you this passage from the Book of Mark, Chapter 12, "Then, one of the scribes came and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving that-"

Sean: Wait, they were reasoning?

Ray: Well, that's what they thought. "That he had answered them well, asked Jesus, "Which is the first commandment of all?" Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is, Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one and you shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. This is the first commandment. The second is this, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these." Now, many of you have heard this before but for some of you, this is going to be a heavy revy. If you love your neighbor as yourself, what do you have to do first?"

Sean: Well, if we adopt the mindset that I'm a worm and everyone else is awesome and then, we're told to love your neighbor as yourself-

Ray: That's crazy.

Sean: Assuming that that means that you treat other people like they're valuable, that's a huge contradiction.

Ray: God is not contradictory. He does not contradict himself. He's the essence of non-contradiction. If you love your neighbor as yourself, then, you have to, first, love yourself, not like yourself, not be like, "Oh, I'm okay, I guess."

Sean: Not in some weird twisted redefined version of love that actually means hate. [laughs]

Ray: "I'm okay as long as God only looks at me through Jesus. If He saw what I really am, he'd think I was a worthless piece of crap. That's not loving yourself.

Sean: No. [crosstalk] value yourself.

Ray: If you worship God as the all-sufficient creator and father, then, you're doing no service to the artist by condemning the art. Now, think about this-

Sean: You're doing no service to yourself by calling something beautiful, ugly.

Ray: Right. You shall love your neighbor as yourself and then, he said, "There is no other commandment greater than these." That's strong language. No other commandment, even your favorite one, the one that allows you to hate gay people



or want to go all crusades on Muslims or whatever your thing is that you like to get up in arms about.

Sean: Keep all the immigrants out of our country.

Ray: Everything except your favorite sins. Another passage I thought I would share with you on the subject of 'Are you important?'. In Romans Chapter 12 Verse 3, it says, "Because of the privilege and authority God has given me-" This is Paul writing to the church in Rome, the people of God in Rome. He says, "I give each of you this warning: Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the face God has given us."

Now, this verse is quoted-

Sean: All the time.

Ray: - to say to people, "Think poorly of yourself."

Sean: Right. Is that what it says?

Ray: We don't even have to do any exegetical fancy footwork.

Sean: No, we don't do any footwork.

Ray: Just read what it says.

Sean: Actually, re-read it. [laughs]

Ray: It says, "Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us." Think accurately about yourself and-

Sean: It's not saying think lower or think higher. He's saying, "Take an honest assessment and think that." [laughs]

Ray: If that messes with your mind, it gets even worse because just before that, he gives you a plan of self-improvement.

Sean: Oh wait, what? No. We're not responsible for any of that.

Ray: Well, according to Paul, he says, "Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world--" That's not saying this plane of existence, it's saying the system of thinking that is present in the world today. "Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect." His will for you is for you to be good and pleasing and perfect, a plan for self-improvement.



Sean: I'm just going to out here-- Paul says you need to take an honest assessment of yourself and I can tell you right now that 99% of people out there don't because they think too lowly of themselves.

Ray: Absolutely, because if you just ask people on the street-

Sean: Are you important?

Ray: -are you important? They're going to say, "No." Even if they are important, they're going to say, "No", because they think that's what they're supposed to say. I'm being humble. Oh Lord, it's hard to be humble.

[music]

Ray: When you're perfect in every way.

[music]

Ray: I can't wait to look in the mirror.

[music]

Ray: I get better looking each day.

[music]

Ray: Not [unintelligible 00:14:29].

Sean: Yes, I'm not-

[music]

Male Announcer: Now, our future presentation.

Ray: We've already drifted into our feature presentation but let's go ahead and drift, dig into this a little further without any more dilly-dallying. Let's cover the three huge reasons that you need to get your self-image healthy and robust. I'm encouraging you to have a healthy and robust self-image, to see yourself as important.

Sean: The term to describe that that I like the most- surprise, surprise- comes from Miss Rand and it was to have unbreached self-esteem.

Ray: Love it. The three reasons to get your self-image healthy and robust, number one was we limit ourselves by the imagery we hold of what we're capable of doing. Number two, our self-image is self-constructed, made of our words, the pictures we hold in our mind and our actions or our physical environment.

Sean: And those ideas that we implicitly believe, accept.



Ray: Our self-image is self-constructed. Dr. Denis Wailey says, "Relentless repetitive self-talk is what changes our self-image."

Sean: I believe that.

Ray: What are you saying to yourself all the time? If you're saying to yourself like there's somebody that I know pretty well who constantly is saying out loud to themselves, "I'm such a loser." Well, your less than conscious mind is listening. When it hears the operating system, your conscious mind-

Sean: Give a command.

Ray: - give a command, your less than conscious mind is saying, "Okay, I'll go to work on that. Let me see how I can make you a loser." This is a hugely important reason why you need to work on improving the health of your self-image. Reason number three is you grow your life by growing your self-image, not just making it better but making it bigger. In the words of the great philosopher, John Mayer, "I'm bigger than my body gives me credit for." I'm quoting from Tony Robbins now, "It was bound to happen sooner or later."

Sean: Sooner or later.

Ray: The most powerful force in the human psyche is people's need for their words and actions to remain consistent with how we define ourselves. Now, this is me talking now. We will do virtually anything to remain consistent with our self-identity.

Sean: Yes, we will, even be completely inconsistent in other areas.

Ray: Even to the point of self-destruction, self-immolation, of destroying the people we love, of behaving completely irrationally-

Sean: Right, because if we have this belief that we suck and that we're bad, then, we will work very hard to make that consistent in our lives. Our brains want consistency. It all starts with how it sees itself.

Ray: If you see yourself as being a person who cannot be committed in a relationship, for instance, you're going to experience that because you think, "This is who I am. I'm just a person who can't have that", but you have the power to change this. Back up to step number two. Our self-image is self-constructed made of our words, pictures and actions, our physical environment, our beliefs which lead to our values, which lead to our rules, which lead to our actions, which leads us to our destiny. Destiny is a big word that people think is grandiose, all it means is destination, where you're headed.

What do you do with all this super philosophical stuff that you've enjoyed hearing Sean and I talk about but don't know what to do with it? I have some ideas and thoughts about what you should do. You should get out a journal and write this stuff down. A friend of ours, Dave Lakhani, says, "Writing is the doing part of thinking."

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Sean: I like that quote.

Ray: If you don't write it down, you just think it, you haven't really done the work. There's something about transferring it from your brain through your hands to the paper that solidifies and crystallizes your thinking and gives you a level of understanding and commitment to the ideas that you wouldn't have otherwise. Number one, journal the answer to this question. These will be in the show notes. If you had a bigger vision for your life, what would it look like now?

Now, I know you don't have a bigger vision for your life so relax, it's okay, but if you did have a bigger vision, what would it look like? Nobody else is going to read this so go nuts.

Sean: Go nuts.

Ray: Number two, in your journal, I would suggest construct the person you want to become. Now, I'm going to offend some of my friends who teach goal setting now. [laughs] Don't worry about specific outcomes. Concern yourself with who you want to become-

Sean: And the values that underpin that image.

Ray: You can think about if there are things that you want to do, you want to achieve, instead of thinking about-- This is where people get all screwed up. They think, "Well, I want to travel the world and visit every continent." They start immediately thinking about, how do I do that? When what they really should be thinking about is, who do I have to become in order to make that happen? Because if you don't become the person who can achieve that thing, you will never achieve it.

Sean: I would even postulate there's a question that comes before that.

Ray: That question is?

Sean: That question is, is this desire-

Ray: Yours.

Sean: Well, not just yours, a good one. Just because I want it and the way that you ask that question is, will this long-term sustain and advance my life?

Ray: When I was much younger, I wanted to go to medical school and become a doctor. I struggled to make that happen for quite some time until I came to a realization after analyzing my motives and thinking through, why do I- why am I trying to do this? That what I was really trying to do was meet the expectations of my grandmother. When I realized that, I ceased to have the desire to become a doctor.

Sean: I think a lot of people want to do things. They have the desire like, "Oh, I want this." They think it's healthy because it's a want, for whatever reason. They don't ask



the question, by what standard is this a good desire? Is this a good desire? Here's the standard, does it sustain and advance your life in the long run?

Ray: That plays directly into my third action step for you, which is grow your self-image intentionally and it starts with asking the question that Sean just postulated. Is this desire, this thing, this new self-image that you have, is it something that sustains your life?

Sean: Right. Is that something that sustains my life or am I trying to win the approval of someone in my life or am I trying to prove to the world around me that I am successful? Well, when you're on your deathbed, are you really going to care if people thought you were successful?

Ray: What other people think of you is none of your business.

Sean: No, it doesn't care, doesn't matter. It's what do you want in a life, not what do you think other people want you to want in a life.

Ray: There's your plan. Get your journal out. Now, I know, you probably- most of you won't do this. Out of a hundred people who hear this, one of you will do this and you're the one who will succeed [laughs] and the other 99, all think they're the one but how's that working out for you so far?

Sean: You got a little spur in your boot today. I don't know what that phrase is. Did I say that right?

Ray: A spur in your boot. I think you're trying to say a burn to my saddle.

Sean: A burn to your- [laughs]

Ray: Or a spur in your boot.

Sean: You got a spur in your boot. [chuckles]

Ray: The three steps- the three things to journal are, if you had a bigger vision for your life, what would it be? That's number one. Number two is, construct the person you want to become and write out your new self-talk.

Sean: I made a mistake.

Ray: What you're going to say to yourself?

Sean: I didn't put the spur in the outside of my boot?

Ray: That's correct.

Sean: I put it on the inside boot.



Ray: You'll quickly realize that you've done that. The third question or point to journal is, grow your self-image intentionally. Write out your plan for how you're going to grow your self-image intentionally.

Sean: Come on. It's good.

Ray: That's all I got.

Sean: All right. Well, if you found the show helpful, give it a review on iTunes. Subscribe to it in the Apple podcast directory and other places that podcasts can be found. To get the show notes, transcripts and any other goodies that might come along with this episode, you can go rayedwards.com/322 and they'll be there. Got any quote worth notes or final thoughts or-

Ray: Yes, I do.

Sean: - final quotes?

Ray: The quote worth note-

Sean: That's a little dark.

Ray: Not a final quote.

Sean: No.

Ray: Hopefully, this is not the final quote I'll give.

Sean: Hopefully. You're right. [laughs]

Ray: It's going to be a bummer for a lot of people. [laughs] "Learn to value yourself, which means fight for your happiness", Ayn Rand.

Sean: Come on. [laughs]

Ray: Until next episode, my prayer for you is that you're blessed, you enjoy long life. and great prosperity, peace to your house and fight for your happiness.

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